

Epistle 48

by George Fox

George Fox's Epistle 48 emphasizes the importance of self-judgment, unity in the light of Christ, and the significance of pure communication among believers.

Scripture: Genesis 9:22, Matthew 7:1

Topics: "Unity in Christ", "Judgment"

Description

George Fox emphasizes the importance of refraining from judging one another and highlights the dangers of backbiting and secret condemnation, which stem from a lack of self-examination in the light of Christ. He urges believers to focus on their own shortcomings and to communicate in love, fostering unity and purity among themselves. Fox calls for a commitment to the covenant of life, encouraging all to walk in the light that reveals truth and condemns evil. He warns against corrupt communication and the influence of worldly traditions, urging the faithful to remain steadfast in their spiritual journey. Ultimately, he reminds them of their inheritance in Christ and the necessity of living in accordance with the spirit to avoid condemnation.

Transcript

Friends, to you all this is the word of the Lord: take heed of judging one another [Mat 7:1f]; judge not one another (I charge you in the presence of the Lord) with that which must be judged; neither lay open one another's weaknesses behind one another's backs; for thou that dost so, art one of Ham's family, which is under the curse [Gen 9:22, 25] . But every one of you in particular with the light of Christ, (which he hath enlightened you withal,) see yourselves, that self may be judged out with the light in every one. Now, all loving the light, here no self can stand, but it is judged with the light [John 3:21]; and here all are in unity, and here no self-will can arise, nor no mastery; but all that is judged out. And let there be no backbiting amongst you; but in love, ye that dwell in the light and see clear, speak to the others, whose minds are gone from the light: else, as I said before, if ye do speak behind their backs, there will be the evil eye and filthy mind, which dare not speak to their faces [Prov 23:6f?]. And so the same mind which doth condemn behind the back, is for condemnation; and so self should be judged first. Here ye will be kept watchful in the pure fear and love of God, and all self will be judged out from amongst you, which would be judging in secret; which is a work of darkness.

And Friends all every where, met together, waiting upon the Lord, that your minds may be guided by the spirit of God up to God. And know the life of God in one another, which all, whose minds are abroad, are

strangers to, and to the covenant of promise; for the covenant and promise of life [2 Tim 1:1] is with and to the seed: and there is no sin, iniquity, or transgression in the covenant [Rom 11:27?]; for that is all judged, being out of the covenant of God. And therefore all wait, that ye all may come to witness the covenant of life [Mal 2:5] made with your souls, and to find the witness, the seal of the spirit [Eph 1:13], that ye are sealed to God with, and that ye may all witness sin and transgression finished [Dan 9:24], and blotted out by Christ Jesus, the new covenant of God; and ye may all come to know the Lord, and to love the light, which Christ hath given you to teach you; then ye will witness the covenant, yea ten thousands [Jude 1:14] will witness the covenant, Christ Jesus. For as the Lord said, 'I will give him for a covenant of light to the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes [Isa 42:6f];' and so, this light doth open the eyes of the blind. All ye that were blind as the Gentiles, or the Jews, ye know, that with the light your eyes are opened, and ye do see the new covenant, the unchangeable priest [Heb 7:24], the unchangeable covenant. So in that which changeth not, dwell, that that which is changeable and wavering, may be judged and condemned with that which changeth not. And though the ministration of condemnation was and is glorious in its time, yet the ministration of the spirit exceedeth in glory [2 Cor 3:8f], which changeth not; and there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, the new covenant, who walk in the spirit. But who are in that which changeth, running into the changeable ways and works without, and are in that nature which hates the light, all such are for condemnation by the light [John 3:19f], which is eternal, and never changeth. And all the beggarly lusts, traditions, and rudiments of men [Gal 4:9, Col 2:8], which are acted in that nature, contrary to the light, are for condemnation by the light.

. . . .

And friends, I charge you all in the presence of the living God, let no evil communication, nor evil words proceed out of your mouths. And if ye find the root in you not taken away, that would act such things, dwell in the light which lets you see the evil communications, and with the light give judgment upon it in the particular, and first judge it there; for that is it which corrupts the good manners. And there are no good manners, but all is corrupted whilst there is evil communication [1 Cor 15:33], and all that profession is abomination to the Lord, whilst that stands. . . .

So, all walk in the light with which ye are enlightened, for it will teach you all the good manners and pure communication, and condemn all corrupt manners and corrupt communication; and so to have the heart and mind cleansed from all such things. And all walking in the light, ye have the besom; labour to sweep the land [Isa 14:23] from all such corrupt manners and vain communication, and with the light all that comes to be judged down. So the light is the judge, and the condemnation; and in the light walk, and ye will shine.

And, my dear brethren in the covenant of life, keep to yea and nay [Mat 5:37], and (call the days,) First-day, Second-day, Third-day, Fourth-day, Fifth-day, Sixth-day, and Seventh-day, as they were given forth, and called by God in the beginning [Gen 1:5,8,13,19,23,31; 2:2]. The endless riches ye are made partakers of, and the endless inheritance ye are come to have a share of, heirs with Christ [Rom 8:17] of the kingdom that never fadeth away [1 Pet 1:4]; and 'ye that suffer with Christ, shall reign with Christ [2 Tim 2:12].' And to you all, friends, who are not come up to the covenant, and cannot witness that ye are come into it, and sealed, (by the spirit,) follow no image makers, but the life guiding you, which is eternal, that will hew down all imaginations, and likenesses, and images [Deut 12:3], and image makers, that the glorious God, the Father of life, may be exalted, the ground of all truth [1 Tim 3:15]. . . . So all to know the ministry and prayer, which is from and in the spirit, and in it all are one; and by it all the contrary is judged. And take heed of pride, but by the eternal spirit keep all that down, and judge it. 'The sacrifices of the

wicked are abomination to the Lord, and he hears not hypocrites; but the prayers of the righteous are heard [Prov 15:8].'

G. F.

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